THE CHRISTIAN ARTE OF THRIVING:

WHEREBY A MAN MAY become rich to God.

Or,

A Sermon vpon MATTH. 6,33. Preached, *by the right Reuerend Father in God,* GEORGE, Lord Bishop of Derry.

Firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, and all theſe things ſhall be added vnto you.

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Dowriaine, George
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THE CHRISTIAN ARTE OF THRIVING.

MATH. 6. 33.

But ſeeke yee firſt the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe; and all theſe things ſhall bee added vnto you.

THE very foundation of a Chriſtian conuerſation, is a right perſwaſion concerning our happineſſe. This therefore being a matter of ſo great conſequence, our Sauiour Chriſt endeuoureth in the latter part of this Chapter, to rectifie our iudgements therein: ſhewing both wherein wee are not to repoſe our felicity, and alſo wherein we are to place our happineſſe. *Lay not vp* (ſaith he) *treaſures to your ſelues on earth*; that is, place not your treaſure, your chiefeſt good, your happineſſe in any earthly things, which are tranſitory and momentany; *but lay vp your treaſure*, that is, place Verſ. 19, 20.

your happinesse and felicity *in heauen*, where perfect and eternall happinesse is onely to be found.

Vers.21. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart bee also:* that is, Whatsoeuer you esteeme your happinesse or chiefest good, on that your heart will bee set; vnto that, your desires, your studies and endeuours will bee referred. If therefore your iudge-

Vers.22. ment, which is the *eye* of your mind, *bee sincere*, and iudge aright of your chiefest good; the whole body (as it were) and course of your life and con-

Vers.23. uersation will be sutable thereunto. But *if your eye be euill*, if you iudge peruersly of your happinesse, placing your chiefest good in earthly and worldly things: then will your conuersation bee worldly and wicked. As for example: If a man set his hart on pleasure, as his chiefest good, the whole frame of his life will bee voluptuous: if on riches, the whole course of his life will be couetous: if on honour and promotion, his whole carriage and deportment will bee ambitious. But if a man shall esteeme the eternall saluation of his soule, as his chiefest good: his life will be spirituall and religi-

Phil.3.20. ous, as hauing his conuersation in heauen. Now if any man shall thinke (as it is to be feared, too many doe) that he can take a wiser course, then that which our Sauiour prescribeth; for he will place his treasure and happinesse both in heauen and in earth too: our Sauiour telleth him, that this can-

Vers.24. not be: for this were to *serue two masters* that are at variance. *You cannot serue God and Mammon:* you cannot be worldlings, and true Christians. You cannot prefix vnto your selues two supreme ends, which

which be repugnant one to the other. If therfore your heart be chiefly on the earth, then is not your happineſſe in heauen.

Our Sauiour hauing laid this foundation concerning the ſupreme ends; in the next place, hee giueth direction concerning the meanes deſtinated and referred thereunto; ſhewing, that as our treaſure is not to be placed on earth, ſo our chiefeſt care ſhould not be ſet on earthly things. *Therefore I ſay vnto you, Take no thought for your life, &c.* And on the other ſide, as our happineſſe is to be repoſed in heauen: ſo we ſhould firſt and principally ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe. And if any ſhall demand, Alas, how then ſhall we liue, what courſe ſhall we take to thriue in this world? Our Sauiour anſwereth, that if wee *firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, all theſe things ſhall be added vnto vs.* Verſ. 25. to 33.

Theſe words therefore { Precept. / Promiſe. } containe two things: a

The precept is two-fold; the one, Negatiue, which is but implied; the other, Affirmatiue, which is expreſſed. The Negatiue, (That we are not firſt to ſeeke the things on earth) is implied partly in the aduerſatiue coniunction *But*, which reſuppoſeth a Negation going before; and partly, in the word *Firſt*: for if wee are firſt to ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, then are we not firſt to ſeeke earthly things. Luk. 12. 31. πλὴν.

But heere it may be demanded, Whether our Sauiour Chriſt do forbid al care for the things of

this life: for so he may seeme, vers. 25. *Wherefore I say vnto you, take no thought for your life, what you shall eate or drinke, or wherewith ye shall bee clothed:* for if wee may not take thought for necessaries, then much lesse for superfluities. And Ioh. 6. 27. *Labour not for the meate that perisheth, but labour for that which endureth vnto euerlasting life.* I answere by a twofold distinction: First, that he forbiddeth μὴ μεριμνᾶτε, (for so he speaketh, vers. 25. & 31.) the immoderate, the carking, the distrustfull care, whereby the heart is diuided, (as the word importeth) and remoued from God: not the moderate and prouident care, which elsewhere is commended in the Scriptures. Secondly, that he forbiddeth inordinate and preposterous care, whereby earthly desires are more cared for, than the glory of God in our saluation: not the orderly care of earthly things, which is subordinated to the glory of God, and our owne saluation, which seemeth to be implied both in this place, and in the 12. of *Luke*. For, *first*, seemeth to haue relation to a second: and therefore when hee biddeth vs, Seeke first the Kingdome of God, hee doth not forbid, nay, he seemeth to imply, that in the second place, and in a secondary respect, we should seeke the things of this life: the former (as *Augustine* saith) *vt bonum nostrum*, the latter, *vt necessarium nostrum, necessarium autem propter illud bonum*: the former, as our chiefe good; the latter, as necessary helpes and supplies whilest we are in this life, as in the way towards happinesse. In the 12. of *Luke* hauing in like sort dissuaded from worldly

μὴ μεριμνᾶτε. so Phil. 4. 6.

Primum relatiuè dicitur ad secundum. Nic. Lyr.

De Serm. Dom. in monte. lib. 2.

worldly cares, in the 32. verse he saith: *But rather seeke the kingdome of God:* and so is the exhortation, Iohn 6.27. to bee vnderstood comparatiuely, Labour not so much, or labour not chiefly for the meate that perisheth. For our Sauiour himselfe in this chapter hauing directed vs, first, after Gods glory, to seeke his kingdome and his righteousnes; his kingdome in the second petition of the Lords Prayer, his righteousnes in the third: in the fourth petition he teacheth vs to aske, and by asking, to seeke the things of this life. And what we are to aske in prayer, we are to seeke and to labour for in our practice, and to endeuour in our liues, lest we may seeme to tempt God.

From the immoderate and preposterous care for the things of this life, our Sauiour dissuadeth by two arguments; the one, because all such care is vaine and superfluous; the other, because it is heathenish and not beseeming Christians. That it is vaine, he proueth by foure reasons: first, *à maiori*, from the more, or greater. The *life is more then the meate, and the body then rayment:* therefore he that gaue the life, will prouide food to sustaine it; and he that prouided the body, will giue rayment to clothe it, namely, to them that moderately and orderly seeke it. Vers. 25.

The second and fourth, *à minori*, from the lesse. God *feedeth the Fowles* without their carefulnesse; and doth not onely clothe, but also adorne *the Lillyes of the field*, which are of no value in comparison of men. Which as they were made for mans vse, so are they supplied with necessaries Vers. 26. Vers. 28, 29, 30.

for mans ſake. If therefore God prouide for them, how much more will he prouide for vs, if we ſhall
Verſ. 27. depend vpon his prouidence in the moderate vſe of lawfull meanes? The third is from the like. For God hath ſet to all men a ſtint, as of their ſtature, ſo of their eſtate: as therefore it were a vaine and idle thing for a man to carke and care for the increaſe of his ſtature; ſo likewiſe for the aduancement of his ſtate aboue that pitch, which God hath limited.

The other argument is, becauſe ſuch care is no way beſeeming Chriſtians: firſt, becauſe it is Heathenish. *The Gentiles*, that doe not know God, nor
Verſ. 32. acknowledge his prouidence, *ſeeke immoderately and preposterouſly after theſe things.* But you muſt
Verſ. 8. not be like vnto them, as before hee had ſaid. Secondly, it becommeth Chriſtians, who haue a heauenly Father, which knoweth what is needfull and expedient for vs better then our ſelues, to caſt their care vpon him, and to depend vpon his Fatherly prouidence. Children that haue wiſe, louing and able parents, doe not vſe to take thought for their foode and rayment, or other neceſſaries, but depend vpon the prouident care of their naturall Parents. How much more ought we, who are the children of God, to depend vpon the prouidence of our heauenly Father? For *if earthly Pa-*
Math. 7. 11. *rents doe know to giue good things to their children; how much more will our heauenly Father giue good things to them that aske him?* who in loue, wiſdome and power doth infinitely more excell earthly Parents, then the heauens exceede the earth.

But

But this argument, that God is our Father, may yet further be enforced. Is God our Father in Christ? then hath he giuen his owne Sonne for vs, that by him we might be made the sonnes of God. If therefore (as the Apostle argueth) *God hath so loued vs, that he spared not his onely begotten Sonne, but gaue him ouer vnto death for vs; how shall not he with him giue vs all things* that are needfull and expedient for vs? Againe, is God our Father? then are we his sonnes: *and if sonnes, then also heires, heires of God, and coheires with Christ*; and therefore to vs also belongeth that comfortable exhortation of our Sauiour Christ, Luke 12. 32. *Feare not, little flocke*, be not distracted with distrustfull care, or feare of want, *it is your Fathers pleasure to giue you a Kingdome*. For if God wil giue vs an heauenly and euerlasting Kingdom; can we imagine that he will denie vnto vs the pettie commodities of this life? So much of the negatiue precept or dehortation.

Rom. 8. 32.

Rom. 8. 17.

Luk. 12. 32.

In the affirmatiue precept or exhortation, we are to note three things. The obiect, or thing to be sought, the dutie of *seeking*, the order and degree, *first*, The obiect is twofold, the *Kingdome of God*, and *his righteousnes*.

As touching the former: there are two kingdomes in the world; the one of darkenes, the other of light. The former is the kingdome of Satan, who is called the Prince, yea, *the god of this world*, who ruleth effectually in the children of disobedience, carrying them captiue to the obedience of his will: vnto this kingdom all men naturally,

Ioh. 12. 31. 2. Cor. 4. 4. Ephes. 2. 2. 1. Tim. 3. 26.

ſince the Fall of *Adam*, are ſubiect; and in that ſubiection doe remaine, vntill they bee tranſlated into the Kingdome of God. The conſideration whereof ought to moue all, that are not in the ſtate of grace, earneſtly and ſpeedily to ſeeke the Kingdome of God. For vntill they belong to Gods Kingdome, they are ſubiects of the kingdome of Satan.

The Kingdome of God is twofold, { Vniuerſall. / Speciall.

His vniuerſall Kingdome is called the Kingdome of his *power* and *prouidence*. Of which it is ſaid, Pſalm. 103.19. *The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heauens, and his Kingdome ruleth ouer all:* vnto this Kingdome all creatures whatſoeuer, be they neuer ſo rebellious, are ſubiect. For although in reſpect of their intent, they ſet themſelues againſt the will of God; yet in reſpect of the euent, they become (though vnwittingly) the inſtruments of God, to bring to paſſe his good purpoſes. Of this kingdome our Sauiour ſpeaketh not in this place. Neither ſhall wee need to ſeeke it, but voluntarily to ſubmit our ſelues vnto it, whereunto all creatures of neceſſity are ſubiect.

His ſpeciall kingdome is that whereby hee ruleth ouer his Elect, who are not onely his kingdome, but his *Family* alſo, whereof one part is in heauen, which is the Church triumphant; the other on earth, which is the Church militant. In regard whereof the ſpeciall kingdome of God hath

Epheſ. 2.19. Gal. 6.10.

hath two parts; the kingdome of *Glory*, and the kingdome of *Grace*. The kingdome of Glory, to the Elect, is a ſtate of Glory, and eternall happineſſe in heauen; where they hauing vnion with Chriſt, and by him communion and fellowſhip with the whole Trinity, enioy the chiefeſt good, which is God himſelfe, in *whoſe preſence there is fulneſſe of ioy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for euermore.* Pſal. 16. 11.

The kingdome of Grace, vnto the Elect, is a ſtate of Grace, and by it, of happineſſe begun in this life, ſtanding in the meanes and degrees of ſaluation, wherein we hauing by the Spirit, vnion with Chriſt as our Head, who is *our life, and with whom our life is hid in God*, Coloſ. chap. 3. verſ. 3, 4. and hauing alſo communion with him in his merits, to our iuſtification, and in his grace and efficacy of his Spirit, to our ſanctification, doe paſſe the time of our pilgrimage, as in his *feare*, ſo alſo in *expectation of euerlaſting happineſſe*. 1. Pet. 1. 17. Tit. 2. 13. The former kingdome is to bee ſought as our ſupreme end, and abſolute felicitie; the latter, as the meanes deſtinated thereunto. Yet both as our happineſſe; that, *vt beatitudo patriæ*; this, *vt beatitudo viæ*; that, as the happineſſe *comprehenſorum*, who are in actuall poſſeſſion; this, as the happineſſe *viatorum*, who liue in expectation: and therfore both alſo are to be firſt ſought: that, in intention, as the end; this, in execution, as the meanes to the end. For whoſoeuer deſireth to be an inheritour of the Kingdome of Glory, where God vnto his Saints is all in all, muſt firſt bee a

faithfull subiect in the Kingdome of Grace, wherin God ruleth in his Saints by his Word and Spirit.

But our Sauiour requireth vs to seeke, not only the Kingdome of God, but also *his righteousnesse*. Where perhaps it may seeme strange, that this addition is heere made, seeing righteousnes is included in the kingdome. For as the Apostle
Rom. 14.17. saith, the *Kingdome of God standeth not in meate or drinke*, or in other things appertaining to this life, *but in righteousnesse and peace, and ioy in the holy Ghost*. Nothing therefore being idle and superfluous in the Word of God: we are to conceiue, that this addition, for more distinct explication, was needfull in respect of our corruption; who would all of vs be thought to seeke Gods Kingdome; whereas but few (in comparison) doe care for his righteousnesse, which notwithstanding is in execution and practice, first to be sought as the chiefe thing in the Kingdome of grace, (the other
Rom. 5. 1, 2. two, *viz.* peace, and ioy, being the fruits and consequents therof) and as the high way to the Kingdome of glory. Now the righteousnesse which we are to seeke, is not our owne, but *his* righteousnesse: as the Glosse hath obserued, *Iustitiam dicit eius, vt per eum, non per vos iusti sitis:* That wee may be righteous, not in and by our selues, but in
2. Cor. 5. 21. and by him. For Christ, *who knew no sinne, was made sinne*, that is, a sinner *for vs*, by imputation of our sinne vnto him, *that we*, who are sinners in our selues, *might be made the righteousnesse of God in him*, that is, righteous before God in him, by imputa-

imputation of his righteouſneſſe vnto vs. The righteouſneſſe therefore, which we are to ſeeke, is not the righteouſneſſe, which is of the law, for that is called our righteouſneſſe: the which, if we ſhall ſeeke with the Iewes, to be iuſtified thereby; we ſhal with them miſſe of the righteouſnes, which is of God. But it is the Euangelicall righteouſnes, or that which is reuealed in the Goſpell, which wee are commanded to ſeeke, which is called the *righteouſnes of God*. The which, as it is the chiefe ſubiect of the Goſpell, as the Apoſtle ſheweth; *I am not* (ſaith he) *aſhamed of the Goſpell of Chriſt, for therein is the righteouſnes of God reuealed*: and againe, that we are not iuſtified by the righteouſnes of the law, but by that *righteouſnes which without the law is reuealed in the Goſpell, euen the righteouſnes of God, which is by faith in Ieſus Chriſt*: ſo is it firſt and principally to be ſought: and in compariſon thereof, we are with the Apoſtle to eſteeme our owne righteouſnes, and whatſoeuer priuiledges we may ſeeme to haue by the law, *as dung, as loſſe: that we may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not hauing our owne righteouſnes, which is of the law; but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſnes which is of God by faith: that we may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip or communion of his ſufferings, being made coformable to his death.* And this righteouſnes is twofold, being either imputed through faith, or infuſed by the Spirit: the former, is the righteouſneſſe of iuſtification; the latter, of ſanctification. The former is called, the *righteouſneſſe of God*, not onely becauſe it is from God,

Rom. 10. 3.

Rom. 1. 17.

Rom. 3. 21, 22.

Phil. 3. 8, 9, 10.

God, and accepted of him, as the latter; but alſo becauſe it is the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, who is God: in which ſence the blood of Chriſt is called the *blood of God*; for Chriſt is called *Iehouah our righteouſneſſe:* and he was giuen vnto vs of God, to be *our righteouſneſſe*. Not that we are iuſtified by the eſſentiall, or vncreated righteouſneſſe of the Deitie (which was the error of *Oſiander*,) but becauſe Chriſt, by whoſe righteouſneſſe we are iuſtified, is God. For to ſpeake properly, we are iuſtified by that righteouſneſſe, which Chriſt performed in his humanitie, in the daies of his fleſh, both paſſiue and actiue: whereupon the Apoſtle ſaith, that we are *iuſtified by his blood*, that is his paſſiue righteouſneſſe, and *by his obedience*, that is his actiue righteouſneſſe. For *as by the diſobedience of one*, (the firſt *Adam*) *many are made ſinners*; *ſo by the obedience of One*, (the ſecond *Adam*) *many are made righteous*. The righteouſneſſe therefore, by which wee are iuſtified, is the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, who is God, without vs, in him. The righteouſneſſe of ſanctification is in vs, from him: for *of his fulnes we haue receiued grace for grace*. For by the merit of Chriſt his obedience, death, and reſurrection apprehended by faith, and imputed vnto vs, we are iuſtified: and by the vertue, power and efficacy of the ſame obedience, death, and reſurrection applied vnto vs by the holy Ghoſt, we are ſanctified. The former is perfect, but not inherent: the latter is inherent, but not perfect. Therefore of iuſtification there are no degrees; but of ſanctification there are, according to the meaſure of

Act. 20. 28.
Ier. 23. 6.
1. Cor. 1 30.
Rom. 5. 9.
Rom. 5. 19.
Ioh. 1. 16.

of grace receiued. By the former, we are intituled vnto Gods kingdome; by the latter, we are fitted and prepared thereunto: for no vncleane thing can enter into the Kingdome of God. The former is the title whereby we claime our inheritance, the latter is the cognizance of thoſe which are heires: therefore it is ſaid, that *by faith we receiue remiſsion of ſinnes, and inheritance among thoſe that are ſanctified.* And therefore alſo it is called the inheritance of the *Saints*. Act. 26.18. and 20.32. Coloſ.1.12.

Theſe two ſorts of righteouſnes, though different in themſelues, muſt concurre in the ſame ſubiect: and therefore we are to ſeeke the one, as well as the other; and not like carnall goſpellers, to be all for *iuſtification*, and nothing for *ſanctification*. For Chriſt was giuen vnto vs of God, as well to bee our *ſanctification* as our *iuſtification*: and out of his ſide there iſſued, as well the *water* of ablution, as the *blood* of redemption. Yea, he hath redeemed vs, as well from the *dominion* of ſinne, as from the *guilt* of it. And therefore no man can be aſſured of his iuſtification, who is not in ſome meaſure ſanctified. For God hath ſworne, that whom he redeemeth, to them he will giue grace to *worſhip him in holines and righteouſnes. Whoſoeuer is in Chriſt, is a new creature. Whoſoeuer are Chriſts, they crucifie the fleſh with the luſts thereof, walking not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* And as the righteouſneſſe of ſanctification is an vnſeparable companion of iuſtification, in ſo much as no man is to be counted righteous, but he *that doth righteouſneſſe*: ſo is it a neceſſary forerunner of glorification. 1.Cor.1.30. 1.Iohn 5.7. Luk.1.73,74,75 2.Cor.5.17. Gal.5.24. Rom.8.1. 1.Iohn 3.7.

Heb.12.14. Ioh.3.3. 1.Cor.6.9. Gal.5.21. tion. *Without holines no man shall see God:* and, *Vnlesse a man be borne againe, he cannot see the kingdome of God. Know ye not that the vnrighteous shall not inherit the kingdome of God?* So much of the obiect.

The dutie is to *seeke:* which word presupposeth a losse of those things, which we are commanded to seeke. For by sinne all of vs naturally are exiles from the Kingdome of glory, falne from a state of grace and happinesse, into a state of disobedience and misery, depriued of the glorious Image of God, wherein wee were created in true righteousnesse and holinesse, and haue got vnto our selues the ougly shape of Satan. In so much that our naturall and carnall wisedome is diuellish: the very [illegible] of our corrupt nature, the naturall inclination and disposition of our minds is not onely an enemy, but *enmity* against God. In which respect our Sauiour doubted not to say vnto *Peter, Auant, Satan, for thou doest [illegible], mind, sauour, affect not the things which be of God, but those that be of men.* This our losse and misery is seriously, to bee acknowledged, and bewailed of vs; that by the acknowledgement and sense thereof, we may be stirred vp studiously to seeke the Kingdome of God, and the righteousnesse which wee haue lost. For Christ our Sauiour came to saue those which were lost, to redeeme captiues, to iustifie those, who by sinne were guilty of damnation, to sanctifie those which were defiled & polluted with sinne. Wherefore if we be not lost in our selues, we need not a Sauiour; nor a Redeemer, if we be not captiues; nor a Iustifier, if wee bee not guilty;

Iam. 3.15. Rom.8.7. Math.16.23.

guilty; nor a Sanctifier, if we be not polluted; neither ſhall wee ſeriouſly ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, if wee doe not truly acknowledge that we haue loſt them.

Now this word *Seeke*, importeth a ſtudious *deſire*, *care*, and *endeuour* to find and to recouer that which we haue loſt. The ſtudious *deſire* muſt bee expreſſed in hearty, earneſt, and faithfull prayer vnto God. For what wee aske in prayer, wee doe ſeeke at the hands of God. Our *care* muſt ſhew it ſelfe in a ſtudious meditation, and ſerious purpoſe to vſe all good meanes, and to auoid the impediments. Our *endeuour* muſt appeare in the carefull and diligent vſing of the meanes, and auoiding the impediments, and in doing whatſoeuer lieth in our power, and not to be wanting to our ſelues in any thing which we are able to performe. For wee are not ſo to caſt the care of our ſaluation vpon God, that we ſhould neglect it our ſelues. He that made vs without vs, will not ſaue vs (I ſpeake of ſuch as come to yeeres of diſcretion) without our owne endeuours. For though in reſpect of ſome mens extraordinary calling, as alſo in regard of the firſt granting of the meanes of ſaluation, to thoſe which before ſate in darkneſſe, it be true, that God *is found of them who ſought him not*; yet, where the ordinary meanes of ſaluation are affoorded, men are bound to ſeeke God in his ordinances, and carefully to vſe thoſe meanes which God hath graciouſly vouchſafed. Neither haue any a promiſe that they ſhal find, vnleſſe firſt they ſeeke.

Math. 7. 7.

Auguſtine.

Thus then wee are to seeke, the Kingdome of glory, and the eternall saluation of our soules. First, by begging this mercy at the hands of God, which he hath promised to them that call vpon him. Secondly, by seeking the Kingdome of grace, and his righteousnesse, as the meanes thereto; that is, by an earnest desire, a serious care and a true endeuour, to attaine to the meanes and degrees of saluation in this life, *viz.* our Vocation, whereby wee are brought into his Kingdome; our Iustification and Sanctification, whereby we are made partakers of his righteousnesse. Thirdly, by endeuoring and giuing all diligence to make our Election, Vocation, and Iustification sure vnto vs by the workes of Sanctification, that is, of piety and righteousnesse. For if *we doe these things, an entrance shall abundantly bee ministred vnto vs, into the euerlasting Kingdome of our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ.* And to encourage vs carefully and diligently to seeke the Kingdome of God and his righteousnesse; let vs remember, that hee which hath commanded vs to *seeke*, hath also promised that *we shall finde*.

Rom.10.13. Luk.23.42, 43.

2.Pet.1.10,11.

Math.7.7,8.

But the chiefe thing which we are to insist vpon, is the order and degree of seeking, required in the word *first*. For where we are enioyned to seek first the Kingdome of God, and his righteousnes, two things are implied. *First*, in *order*, before all other things, that is, in the first place: and first, in *degree*, aboue all other things, that is, chiefly and principally. As touching the former; It may bee obiected, that in the Lords Prayer we are taught, to

to seeke first, not the Kingdome of God, or his righteousnesse, but the glory of God in the first Petition, his Kingdome in the second, and his righteousnes in the third. It is true indeed, that among all things whatsoeuer, the glory of God is first to be sought, as the supreme vniuersall end, whereunto our saluation it selfe is subordinated. But heere our Sauiour teacheth vs, what to seeke first, *in bonis nostris*, in those good things which appertaine vnto vs: and so our eternall saluation & happines is first to be sought, as our own chiefe good, and as the Philosophers call it, αὐτὸ ἀγαθόν.

Now that we are first, and without any further delay, to seeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse, it appeareth, first by the commandement of God, not onely in this place, but elsewhere also in the Scriptures. Esa. 21. 12. *If you will seeke, seeke, returne, come*: for this σπουδήν, as we call it, importeth haste. As if hee had said, If yee will seeke the Lord indeed, seeke him without delay, returne by repentance, come by faith. Esa. 55.6. *Seeke the Lord whilest he may be found, and call vpon him whilest he is neere.* Psalm. 95. *To day if yee will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts,* (as they do, which delay to yeeld obedience to his Word) but whilest it is called *to day*, euen to day, before to morrow, turne vnto him. And agreeable to the Canonicall Scriptures is that exhortation of the son of *Syrach*: *Delay not* (saith he) *to turne vnto the Lord, and put not off frō day to day: for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy security thou shalt be destroied, & perish in the day of vēgeance.*

Esa. 21. 12.

Psal. 95. 7.

Heb. 3. and 4.

Eccles. 5. 7.

Psal.63.1.

2 By the practice of the faithfull, and namely, of *Dauid*, who professeth, Psal.63.1. that *early* hee would seeke the Lord. And Psal. 27.8. when the Lord said, *Seeke yee my face*, his heart made answere to God with this Eccho of a ready minde, *Thy face, Lord, will I seeke.*

3 By other pregnant reasons, whereby is manifested the absurd folly of those, who put off their conuersion, and care of their saluation vntill their old age, or last sickneſſe; as if they meant to doe that last (if euer they doe it) which Christ requireth to be done in the first place. For that which is commonly said, is most of all verified in this particular: *Mora trahit periculum*, Delay breeds danger. And that because of the vncertainty both of a longer life, and of repentance to bee attained after delay. For we haue no charter or lease of our liues, but are tenants at will: who must giue vp our soules into the hands of God, whensoeuer it shall please him to call them, hauing no assurance that we shall liue vntill to morrow. And therefore it were extreme folly to deferre our conuersion vnto God, or seeking of his Kingdome (whereupon our saluation dependeth,) though it were but vntill to morrow. But suppose we should liue so long as wee vainly promise to our selues; what assurance haue we, that we shall then repent? For first, it is not a thing in our power to repent when we list, but it is the free gift of God, which ordinarily he offereth in the meanes of our saluation. But if we harden our hearts against those meanes, as those doe, which voluntarily delay their turning

ning vnto God: what hope will there bee of our future conuerſion, when the meanes ordained by God for our ſaluation, by our delay become a meanes of our obduration; when the Word of God, which to the faithfull is the *ſauour of life vnto life*, through our default becommeth vnto vs the *ſauour of death vnto death?* 2. Cor. 2. 16.

2 Againe, if we will not accept the grace of God, when it is offered, as daily he intreateth vs by his Miniſters and Embaſſadours, that we would be *reconciled* vnto him; what aſſurance haue we, that hereafter wee ſhall haue ſo much grace as truely to deſire it. Or if we ſeeme to deſire, and to begge it at the hands of God, how can we promiſe to our ſelues, that if we will not heare God when hee ſpeaketh vnto vs, hee ſhould heare vs when we ſpeake to him? Doth not the wiſdom of God proteſt againſt impenitent ſinners, (as thoſe are which delay their repentance) that for as much as he called, and they would not heare; therefore, when in their diſtreſſe they ſhould call vpon him, *he will not anſwere, neither will be found of them when they ſhould ſeeke him.* And to the ſame purpoſe the Prophet *Zachary* concludeth: *Therefore it is come to paſſe, that as he cried, and they would not heare; ſo they cried, and I would not heare, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* 2. Cor. 5. 20. Prou. 1. 24, 28. Zach. 7. 13.

3 Moreouer, God ſeemeth to deale with vs, as *Popilius Lenas*, the Romane Embaſſadour, dealt with King *Antiochus*, who giuing a dilatory anſwere to his meſſage, with his ſtaffe he drew a circle about the King, and required him in the name of Hieron. in Dan. 11.

of the Senate and people of Rome, to giue him a direct answere, before he came out of that circle. So the Lord hath inclosed vs in a small circle of time, which is called *the day of our visitation*, and the *acceptable time*, which at the most is the short period of this transitory life, which vanisheth *like a vapour:* requiring vs, when with *Antiochus* wee seeke delaies, before we come out of that circle, to giue him our answere. For if when the Lord giueth vs *a time to repent*, as he did to that *Iezabel*, spoken of Apoc. 2. 10. and we doe not repent, we are to feare the like iudgements, that are there threatned against her; or the like curse which Christ gaue to the figge tree, hauing, like an hypocrite, leaues, but no fruite as yet; *Let no fruite growe on thee from hence-forward for euer.*

Luke 19.44.
2.Cor.6.2.
Iam.4.14.
Apoc.2.10.
Matth 21.17.

4 Againe, repentance by delay groweth more difficult. For when repentance is delaied, sinne is nourished, and being nourished, getteth strength within vs, growing in strength, as wee growe in yeeres. Therefore as crooked plants, whilest they be young, may easily be bowed or broken at your pleasure, the which if you suffer so to continue vntill they be growne trees, you shall not be able to stirre: so whilest our sinnes are but young (as by originall sinne, if it be not increased by practice and continuance, they are but euill inclinations and dispositions) they are more easily subdued; which if by continuance they grow to bee confirmed habits, they will subdue vs. For custome becommeth as it were another nature, so that a man will as easily forgoe a member of his body, as forsake

ſake a ſinne whereunto he hath been accuſtomed. *Can the Æthiopian change his skinne, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may you alſo doe good, that are accuſtomed to doe euill,* as the Lord ſaith by his Prophet *Ieremy*. Ierem. 13. 23.

5 But ſuppoſe, that thou maiſt ſeeme to repent at the laſt, which many (alas) do not ſo much as ſeeme to doe, dying either deſperate as *Iudas*, or ſenceleſſe as *Nabal*: yet what aſſurance haſt thou, that thy repentance which is wrung from thee by extremitie of affliction, will bee ſound? Doth not the Pſalmiſt teſtifie, that the Iſraelites, howſoeuer in outward ſemblance and profeſſion, when the Lord *did ſlay them, they ſought him, and enquired early after God*; notwithſtanding they did but *flatter him with their mouth, and lyed vnto him with their tongues: for their heart was not right with him, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his couenant?* Doth not wofull experience ſhew, that many, whileſt they are in any extremity by ſicknes or otherwiſe, will ſeeme very penitent, and promiſe great matters, if God would be pleaſed to reſtore them to their former eſtate; who when they are reſtored, returne to their former courſes, and perhaps become worſe then euer they were before. Euen as water that hath been heated, when it cooleth againe, is colder then before? For as when a man draweth a bowe, it followeth his hand: but when he letteth his hand goe, it returneth to his former eſtate: ſo, many, whileſt the hand of God is vpon them, whereby he ſeeketh to draw them vnto himſelfe, doe ſeeme to follow his hand; who when the Pſal. 78. 34, 36.

Lord taketh away his hand, returne to their former condition, and perhaps turne aside like a *deceitfull bow*: which is a fearefull signe, that when they *howled* vnto the Lord vpon their beds, *they cried not from their heart*, as the Prophet *Hosea* speaketh, and that when they seemed to turne vnto the Lord, and to seeke him early, *their heart was not vpright*, as *Dauid* testifieth of the Iewes. The which I speake, not to censure those which bee gone, but to admonish vs, that we doe not presume. For howsoeuer we are in charitie to iudge the best of them, who before their departure haue seemed to repent; yet we are to be iealous of our selues, and to feare, if we neuer haue repentance vntill by strong hand it be extorted from vs; lest perhaps it will not be found. And this was the third reason manifesting the folly of them, who deferre this duty of seeking Gods Kingdom from day to day.

Psalm.78.57. Hos.7.16.

Hos.7.14.

Psalm.78.37.

4 If we first seeke the Kingdome of God and his righteousnes, we shall not onely finde them; but also all the things of this life, which are expedient for vs, shall be added ouer and aboue them by way of aduantage, as our Sauiour here promiseth. But on the other side, if wee first seeke the things of this life, and put off the care of our saluation to our latter daies; as we shall be in great danger, for earthly things which are vaine and momentany, to lose an eternall kingdome in Heauen: so haue we no assurance, that we shall obtaine our worldly desires. For it is the blessing of God that maketh rich. But if we belong vnto him,

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we are to make account, that he will croſſe our prepoſterous deſires, and by croſſes and afflictions, as it were by weeping croſſe, bring vs to himſelfe, and weane vs from worldly deſires, that we may mind and affect the things which are aboue.

5 But ſuppoſe we attaine to our vvorldly deſires, hauing not yet ſought the Kingdome of God, nor cared for the ſaluation of our ſoules: then will not theſe worldly goods be good vnto vs: for as the wiſe man ſaith, All theſe things are for good to the godly, ſo to the ſinners they are turned vnto euill. For to a worldly man that ſeeketh not the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſnes, what is pleaſure, but the luſt of the fleſh; what riches, but the Mammon of iniquitie; what honour, but the pride of life; what learning and wiſdome, but *armata nequities*, whereby men are enabled to doe the more hurt; what long life it ſelfe, but a longer continuance in ſinne? But on the other ſide, if we firſt ſeek the kingdome of God and his righteouſnes; all theſe outward things ſhall be added vnto vs, as bleſſings and fauours of God, and pledges of his loue: or if we may ſeeme to want any temporall bleſſings, the ſeeming want thereof ſhall not hinder our happineſſe. Bleſſed are you, ſaith our Sauiour to the faithfull, though you be poore; bleſſed though you mourne, &c. for though they ſeeme poore, yet are they truly rich; yea, rich to God, Luke 12. 21. not onely becauſe they haue a treaſure laid vp in Heauen, but alſo becauſe godlines with contentednes is great riches, neither is any man ſo rich as hee that is contented:

Eccluſ. 39.27.

Luke 6.20.21.

1. Tim. 6.6.

though they be abridged of worldly pleasures, yet they onely haue the true delight: to them a good conscience is a continuall feast, and hauing peace of conscience, they haue also the ioy in the holy Ghost, which, as S. *Peter* saith, is vnspeakeable and glorious. Though they may seeme base in the eyes of the world, yet who are so truly honourable as they, who are the sonnes and heires of God, and coheires of Christ? Though they are simple, yet who so wise as those that feare God? who so learned as those who know God to bee their Father, Christ to be their Sauiour, and the holy Ghost to be their sanctifier? Though their life sometimes be short, yet is it recompenced with immortality; and who may be thought so long-liued, as those in whom our Sauiour hath begun a spirituall life, which neuer shall haue end?

Rom. 5. 1, 2. and 14. 17.

1. Pet. 1. 8.

Rom. 8. 17.

Psalm. 111. 10.

6 Vntill we seeke the Kingdome of God and his righteousnes, we remaine in the kingdome of Satan, and in the state of damnation, out of which we haue need to haste.

7 Lastly, vntill wee seeke the Kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, we doe nothing but sinne, this duty being the first which we can doe without sinne. And therefore by delaying this duty, which ought first to bee done, we doe nothing but adde sinne to sinne, and hoord vp wrath against the day of wrath.

You see what our duty is; let vs now consider our practice. Do not very many that would seeme Christians, deferre their seeking of Gods Kingdome, and care of their saluation, vntill their old

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age or time of ſickneſſe; making choice of that time, which is moſt vnfit to beginne their repentance? and yet when age or ſickneſſe commeth, they ſtill defer their turning vnto God and ſeeking of his Kingdome, ſo long as there is hope of life. For what is the courſe that theſe men take, when God by ſicknes ſummoneth them as it were to appeare before him? firſt, they ſend to the Phyſician. That they ſend to the Phyſician, I miſlike not, ſo it be done in due order. But firſt we ſhould labour to make our peace with God, humbling our ſelues vnder his hand, confeſſing and bewailing our ſinnes, whereby we haue prouoked him to anger, turning to him that ſmiteth vs, and flying vnto him by hearty, earneſt and faithfull praier for the pardon of our ſinnes, that the cauſe of our affliction being remooued, the affliction it ſelfe may either be remooued or ſanctified vnto vs. Then are we to vſe Phyſicke and other lawfull helpes, depending on the bleſſing of God in the vſe of them. But theſe men firſt ſend to the Phyſician, and whileſt they haue any hope of life, they neuer ſeeke to God, nor take care what ſhall become of their ſoules. But when the Phyſician giueth them ouer as paſt recouerie; then, and neuer till then, they ſend for the Miniſter; then, and neuer till then, they ſeeke God and his Kingdome. As though their meaning were, whē they leaue to liue, then onely to begin to liue to God, and hauing all their time led the life of the Reprobate, to dye neuertheleſſe the death of the iuſt. But be not deceiued, *qualis vita, finis ita*; ſuch as hath bin

the life, such commonly is the end: and ordinarily the Greeke saying is true, πονηρᾶς βιοτῆς πονηρόν ἐστι καὶ τέλος, Of an euill life, there is an ill end. I take not vpon mee to restraine Gods mercy from those, who at the last turne truely vnto him: but I speake of that which is ordinary. It is to be feared, that not one of an hundred, who haue al their life time deferred their repentance, doth repent at the last houre: and therefore it is an hundred to one, that thou shalt not then repent, if thou deferrest till then.

But the Kingdome of God is also to be sought *first*, aboue all things, that is, chiefly and principally, and that for these reasons. 1. Because the saluation of our soules in the Kingdome of Glory, and the degrees of saluation in the Kingdome of Grace, is our true happinesse. The former, as *beatitudo patriæ*: the other, as *beatitudo viæ*: and being our happinesse, and consequently our chiefest good, are in our iudgements to bee esteemed, in our affections to be desired, in our endeuours to be laboured for aboue all other things; nothing else being to bee desired or sought for otherwise, than as it may bee a furtherance, or at least no hinderance thereunto. As for the things of this life, they are so farre from being the chiefe good, as that to them that set their hearts vpon them, and seeke them chiefly, they are not good at all. All these things (saith the Wise man) are for good to the godly, but to the sinners they are turned into euill. For to those that seeke them chiefly, they are not onely vaine and vnprofitable, as *Salomon* testifieth, but through their owne default

Regnum ergo & iustitia Dei bonum nostrum est, & hoc appetendum est, & ibi finis constituendus, propter quod facimus, quæcunque facimus. August. de serm. Domini in Mont. lib. 2.

Eccles. 39. 27.

Eccles. 1. 2. & 2. 11.

fault, hurtfull alſo and pernicious vnto them; as being not onely thornes to choke the ſeed of grace in them; but alſo the baits of ſinne, and ſnares of the diuell. For which cauſe *Salomon* ſaith, The proſperity of fooles deſtroyeth them. Againe, The ſaluation of our ſoule is an eternall good. Theſe things, if they be good, are but momentany. For as the whole earth, compared to the heauens, is but as a poynt of no ſenſible quantity; ſo our whole time vpon the earth, is but as a moment or poynt of time, in compariſon of eternity. Who therefore would preferre the momentany vſe of earthly vanities in this world, before the euerlaſting fruition of the ſuperexcellent eternall waight of glory in heauen?

Pro.1.32.

To happineſſe two things required, fulneſſe & perpetuity. Pſal.16.11.

Thirdly, conſider the wickedneſſe and profane folly of thoſe who chiefly ſeeke worldly things. For firſt, their eye being euill, their whole life is anſwerable, as was ſaid before. 2. They, which profeſſe religion, and chiefly ſeeke earthly things, as all worldlings doe, are notorious hypocrites; giuing their face and outward profeſſion to God, but their heart, with all their chiefe deſires, ſtudies and endeuours to Mammon. 3. Thoſe that chiefly loue the world, and the things of this world, the loue of God is not in them. Yea, being louers of the world, they are found to be haters of God; for the amity of this world is enmity againſt God. 4. Thoſe who remouing their harts from God, doe ſet them on the world, are Idolaters, or as Saint *Iames* calleth them, Adulterers, who haue no inheritance in the Kingdome of God.

Ver.23.

1.Ioh 2.15,16.

Iam.4.4.

God. 5, Thoſe who chiefly affect the world, doe ſubordinate the profeſſion of Religion, and the care of keeping a good conſcience to worldly deſires; and therefore in time of triall they fall away. Whereas contrariwiſe, they whoſe treaſure is in heauen, and haue their Anchor of hope fixed there, will not ſuffer themſelues either to be allured to that which is euill, by the deſires of the world: which they eſteeme as vanities, in compariſon of heauenly happineſſe; or to bee terrified from that which is good, by the afflictions and calamities of this life, which are not worthy of the glory that ſhall bee reuealed. 6. That which is ſaid of couetous perſons, is true of all worldlings, that they haue ſet their ſoules to ſale, taking for them (as the price thereof) the vanities of the world: And therefore are more fooliſh and profane than *Eſau*, who ſold his birth-right for a meſſe of pottage. For theſe men (for matters of like value, and leſſe neceſſity) make away an euerlaſting inheritance in the Kingdome of heauen.

Eccleſ. 10. 9.

Gen. 25. 33, 34. Heb. 12. 16.

Finally, thoſe, which profeſſing themſelues Chriſtians, doe chiefly ſeeke earthly things, doe caſt away their ſoules; not onely loſing their inheritance in heauen, but alſo plunging themſelues into hell. For they which walke, that is, make profeſſion of religion, and yet chiefly minde earthly things; the Apoſtle ſaith, that their end is damnation. And they which ſowe to the fleſh, muſt looke of the fleſh to reape corruption.

Phil. 3. 19. Gal. 6. 8.

Fourthly conſider, the doctrine of the Goſpell teaching vs to deny all worldly luſts, Tit. 2. 12.

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the vow of Baptisme, to renounce them: the duty of all true Christians, and the practice of Gods children. For so many of vs as are true Christians, are also to be perswaded, that we are elected, called, redeemed, regenerated vnto life eternall in the kingdome of God. And consequently, that we are heires, yea, Citizens of heauen, and pilgrims and strangers vpon earth, who ought to vse *hac vita, vt via*, this life, as a way to a better life; and the things of this life, as helpes onely, and not as hindrances in our way; not to set our hearts vpon them, but to vse the world, as not abusing it, being weaned from worldly desires, and minding the things which are aboue. For it were a foule shame for vs, who are appointed to heauen, and called to Gods Kingdome, to be wholly or chiefly addicted to the earth, like earth-wormes, or Serpents that crawle vpon the earth; like vncleane fishes, which wanting finnes, doe lie in the mud; like blind beetles, which hauing wings, notwithstanding are, for the most part, poring in the dung of the earth.

Phil. 3. 20. Heb. 11. 13.

Heb 12. 1.

1. Cor. 7. 31. Psal 131. 2. Col 3. 1, 2.

And lastly, consider the practice of the Godly; of *Moses*, who when he was forty yeeres old, refused to be called the sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter, chooſing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enioy the pleasures of sinne for a season: esteeming the reproach of Christ (so hee calleth the afflictions of the members of Christ) greater riches then the treasures of Egypt. And the reason of all this was, because hee had respect to the recompence of reward; that is, preferred

Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26.

the saluation of his soule to all worldly respects: for he that hath an eye to the reward both of the godly and wicked, will not onely chuse to be a bond-seruant among the people of God, rather then to be a Gallant in *Pharaohs* Court; but hee will also chuse to be as poore a *Lazar*, as *Lazarus* himselfe, rather then to be another *Dines*. Luk.16.

Of *Dauid* in the fourth Psalme: There be many that say, Who will shew vs any good? seeking chiefely after worldly profit. But, Lord, saith he, lift thou vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs, shew thy selfe fauourable and gracious vnto vs in Christ our Sauiour. This he would more reioyce in, then the worldlings themselues in all their prosperity. For, though he were a great and glorious King, yet he reposed not his happinesse neither in profit, nor in pleasure, nor in promotion: but in the saluation of his soule, and the degrees thereof, as iustification and sanctification. And in Psal.27.4. This is that one thing which he desired of the Lord, and which hee saith hee would seeke after; being indeede that one thing, whereof by the testimony of our Sauiour there is necessity. Psal.4.6,7. Psal.32.1,2. and Psal.119.1 Psal.27.4. Luk.10.42.

Of the Apostles, who forsooke all they had in this world, to follow our Sauiour Christ. But chiefely of the Apostle *Paul*, who though hee had many things to glory in: yet hee esteemed all as dung, yea as losse, in comparison of his iustification and saluation by Christ. Phil.3.8,9.

The vse hereof is two-fold; reproofe of worldlings, instruction to our selues. And first, we are to reprooue

reprooue the folly of worldlings, who throughout the whole booke of the Prouerbs are *Salomons* fooles: who are not, as wee say, penny-wise and pound-foolish, but body-wise and soule-foolish. For what greater folly can there bee, then for momentany fruitiõ of earthly vanities, to lose an euerlasting kingdome in heauen; for the pleasure of a moment (as this whole life is no more, nor yet so much, compared to eternity) to incurre euerlasting misery; for the trifles and vanities of this world, to make away our soule, which is of more worth vnto vs, then all the world besides?

And secondly, the profaneneſſe and wickedneſſe of worldly-minded men; who either prefer the obtaining and enioying of their worldly desires, before not onely the meanes of their saluation, as those in the Gospell; but also before the glory of God, and their owne saluation: or else subordinate their profession of Religion to their worldly respects: who when they ought to affect the things of this life, so farre onely as they concurre with their spirituall good: contrariwise affect and professe Religion onely so far, as it may stand with the obtaining or enioying of their worldly desires. And therefore euen in their profession of Religion, wherein they would seeme to seeke the Kingdome of God, they chiefly seeke (like hypocrites) their worldly ends.

Math. 22. 5. Luk. 14. 18, 19, 20.

To these men, not Godlinesse is gaine, but gaine is godlineſſe, 1. Tim. 6.

The instruction which wee are to learne from hence, is also twofold. For first, if we are chiefly to seeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteousneſſe, then must wee hunger and thirst after the

grace of God, and his ſpirituall bleſſings in heauenly things, aboue all the things in this world. Then our chiefe care alſo muſt be, to keep a good conſcience, and to vſe all good meanes whereby our ſaluation may be furthered: to enter into a religious courſe of life, wherein wee may walke before God in ſincerity and truth: to make choyce of our calling, of our company, of our marriage, as may beſt ſtand with our ſpirituall good. But chiefly and aboue all, to auoid thoſe things which doe hinder the ſaluation of our ſoules. Now the ſoule is loſt by ſinne; for the ſoule that ſinneth, ſhall die. Seeing therefore the ſoule, which is of more worth vnto vs than all the world beſides, is loſt by ſinne; we ought euery one to haue this vnfained purpoſe and ſettled reſolution, *not to ſinne wittingly and willingly, though wee might gaine the whole world thereby*; and much leſſe the particular and pettie deſires thereof. Should we not ſinne to gaine the whole world; and ſhall euery trifle in the world moue vs to ſinne? For what is that which by ſinne wee gaine, in compariſon of the world; and what is the whole world to a mans ſoule? For what will it profit a man, if hee ſhall gaine the whole world, and loſe his owne ſoule? Or what ſhall a man giue in exchange for his ſoule?

Mark. 8. 36.

Secondly, wee are to learne (as wee haue been taught) to place our happineſſe and felicity in the ſaluation of our ſoules. For then the eye of our mind ſhall bee ſingle and ſincere, and the whole courſe of our life and conuerſation will bee ſpirituall

tuall and religious. Then will all our deſires, cares, ſtudies and indeuours tend chiefly to this end. Then ſhall we alwaies, with *Moſes*, haue an eye to the recompence of reward; and with our Sauiour Chriſt, for the ioy that is ſet before vs, deſpiſe all earthly things, Heb. 12. Then ſhall wee paſſe the time of this our pilgrimage, in a longing expectation of euerlaſting happines. And therefore thrice happie are they, who haue laid vp their treaſure in Heauen, and repoſed their felicitie in the ſaluation of their ſoules.

Now followeth the promiſe which Chriſt hath annexed to his commandement: *And all theſe things ſhall be added vnto you.* Where, before wee come to the words, we may, out of the promiſe in generall, not vnprofitably obſerue two things: *viz.* the gracious dealing of God with vs, and our vngracious indiſpoſition in reſpect of ſpirituall things. For whereas God, in reſpect of his abſolute dominion ouer vs, might enioyne vs thoſe things which appertaine to his glory onely, without reſpect of our good, as men vſe to deale with their ſeruants; yet he commandeth vs ſuch things as doe tend to our owne good. And that he might allure vs to ſeeke our owne good, he addeth gracious promiſes thereunto.

The thing which our Sauiour here enioyneth, is, That we ſhould ſeeke our owne happines. And that we may be allured thereunto, he hath promiſed, that ſeeking, we ſhall find. And not only that, but becauſe we are ſenſuall, and too much addicted to the things of this life, he promiſeth, that if

we ſhall firſt ſeeke our true and euerlaſting happines, we ſhall not only obtaine it; but in the meane time he will giue vnto vs a ſupplie of all theſe outward things, which naturally we doe ſo much deſire. Wherein the Lord dealeth with vs, as louing Parents deale with their children: who vſe to allure them to learne or practiſe ſome thing which may be for their ſingular good, by promiſing vnto them ſome pretty or pleaſing reward, wherewithall as children they are more affected. The which gracious goodnes of God ſhould allure and encourage vs, to ſeeke firſt his kingdome and his righteouſnes. Secondly, we may obſerue our owne vntoward diſpoſition to that which is ſpiritually good. For whereas all men naturally and neceſſarily deſire happines: yet when we are informed, that our happines conſiſteth in ſpiritual bleſſings in heauenly places, we haue no mind thereunto. Neither can we, to the ſeeking thereof, bee moued either by the commandements of God, though wholy intending our good, or yet by the promiſe of ſpirituall bleſſings, vvhich are vvorth many vvorlds; but the Lord muſt be faine to allure vs to ſeeke our eternall happines, by promiſing vnto vs temporall revvards; vvhich are but trifles to pleaſe children vvithall, in compariſon of the other. And yet ſuch is the vvayvvardnes of a great number, that neither by the commandements of God, nor by his threatnings, neither by the promiſes of a better life, nor by the promiſes of this life, they can bee moued to affect or ſeeke ſpirituall things. The which vntoward indiſpoſition

tion is so much the more absurd, because it is contrary to the profession of Christians. For Christian religion teacheth vs to deny worldly lusts. And Tit.2.12.
in the vowe of our Baptisme we haue promised to renounce thē. And professing our selues Christians, we professe our selues pilgrims in this world, and citizens of Heauen: and therefore ought to be weaned from earthly desires, and affect and mind the things which are aboue. But to come to the promise it selfe.

In handling whereof, I will first explaine the words as they lye in order, and then confirme the truth of this promise; that it may serue as a forcible argument to moue vs, to seeke first the kingdome of God and his righteousnes.

The coniunction *And*, is here vsed as a note of consequence; as if he had said, Seeke first the kingdome of God and his righteousnes, and *then* all these things shall be added vnto you. Which teacheth vs, that these temporall benefits, by the promise and blessing of God, are consectaries of spirituall grace; that is, doe follow vpon our study and care in seeking first the Kingdome of God and his righteousnes: *id est*, saith *Augustine*, *Consequentur, si ista quæretis*. But if any man shall hereupon infer, that then (belike) the things of this life are promised to them that shall neglect them altogether: I answere, They are promised, not to those that tempt God, or liue inordinately: but to them that seeke them in a secondary respect, and subordinate their desire and care in seeking of them, to their spirituall good. God would haue

euery

euery man ordinarily to liue in a lawfull calling, and to bee industrious therein: to get his liuelyhoode in the sweate of his browes, and walking ordinately, to eate his own bread, 2. Thes. 3. 11, 12. Act. 20. 35. Ephes. 4. 28. The slothfull persons are sent to the Pismire to schoole, of her to learne industry and prouidence, Prou. 6. 6. The Housholder is bound in conscience to prouide for his Family, and the Father for his children, 1. Tim. 5. 8. 1. Cor. 12. 14. and the good housewife is highly commended, Prou. 31. Our Sauiour Christ commandeth vs, by prayer to seeke our daily bread; and what we desire in our prayer, we are to seeke in our practice. This promise therefore seemeth to be the same in effect with that, Psalm. 128. 1, 2. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and walketh in his waies; for thou shalt eate the labour of thine hands.* That is, If wee first seeke his Kingdome, and his righteousnes, he will blesse our labours and indeuours for these outward things. They shall follow vpon our pietie and chiefe study for heauenly things, without our carking and immoderate care; but not ordinarily, without our prouident care and honest endeuours. Wee are therefore first to seeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteousnes; and then to seeke, in a secondary respect, the things of this life, as helpes in this our way to a better life. For as I said before, the word *first*, seemeth to haue relation to a second; and when we are commanded to seeke heauenly blessings first, it is implied, that in a second place wee are to seeke the blessings of this life. This if wee doe,

doe, we are in the vſe of honeſt meanes, to depend on the bleſſing of God according to his promiſe, caſting our care vpon him; and referring the ſucceſſe vnto God, not troubling our ſelues, or taking thought * what ſhall be the euent, the knowledge whereof belongeth onely to God.

* That is, μεριμνᾶν, forbidden, Luk. 12. 29. Tu præſens cura, Domino committe futura.

Theſe things] Which be needfull and expedient for this life. For God hath not therefore commanded vs firſt to ſeeke his kingdome, and the life to come, that we ſhould want the neceſſary helps of this life: but that hauing ſought that firſt, wee might more fully enioy theſe, with the fauour and bleſſing of God. As if hee ſhould ſay (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) I forbid you to ſeeke theſe things; not that you may not receiue them, but that you may receiue them more abundantly. For ſo hee ſaith,

All theſe things] God therefore dealeth liberally with vs, giuing vs richly all things to enioy. If he be our ſhepheard, we ſhall lacke nothing, Pſal. 23. If wee feare him, there ſhall bee no want vnto vs, Pſalm. 34. If we walke vprightly before him, he will deny nothing vnto vs that is good, Pſalm. 84. Come to our Sauiour therfore, you who ſay, Who will ſhew vs any good? and hee will ſhew you the Chriſtian εὐσεβείας, or Arte of Thriuing. *Firſt* (ſaith he) *ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, and all theſe things ſhall be added vnto you.* For indeed, Godlineſſe (with contentednesſe) is great Thrift, hauing the promiſes not onely of the life to come, but of this life alſo. This then is the moſt compendious way for a man to bee

1. Tim. 6. 17. Pſal. 23. 1. Pſal. 34. 10. Pſal. 84. 11. Pſal. 4. 6. 1. Tim 6. 6. εὐσεβείας. 1. Tim. 4 8.

rich vnto God, and to attaine to all things that
Luk.12.21. are needfull and expedient, & to enioy them with
Prou.10.22. the fauour of God, whose blessing maketh rich.

But the principall word to be obserued heere, is, *added. All these things shall be added vnto you.* For first, by this word is presupposed, that those who seeke first the Kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, shall obtaine those things which they principally seeke; and ouer and besides them, all these outward things shall be added vnto them. As to *Salomon*, when he asked wisedome of God,
1.King.3.13. the Lord did not onely giue him wisedome, but thereunto added riches and honour. This therefore must stirre vs vp, seriously and cheerfully to seeke, knowing that our labour shall not bee in
1.Cor.15.58. vaine in the Lord. I said not to the seed of *Iacob*,
Esa.45.19. Seeke ye me in vaine, saith the Lord. For as hee hath commanded vs to seeke; so hee hath promi-
Math.7.7,8. sed, that seeking, we shall finde, Math. 7. And in this place, that we shall not onely finde his kingdome, and his righteousnesse, which chiefly wee seeke; but that thereunto shall bee added all the things of this life which are expedient for vs.

Secondly, wheras he saith not, All these things shall be giuen, but that they shall bee added, hee teacheth vs, that temporall blessings are not promised as the principall reward of our seeking: but as accessaries and additions giuen ouer
ἐν προσθήκης μέρει, *auctarij, vel Mantisæ loco.* and aboue the principall, by way of aduantage. As Tradesmen, when they will deale bountifully with their buyers, doe vse by way of aduantage, to adde somthing to the number, waight, or measure

ſure of that commodity which they vtter. So that ſpirituall bleſſings in heauenly places, are the rewards which principally are giuen; temporall bleſſings are but pettie rewards, and additions, which are added by way of aduantage. This therfore teacheth vs againe, that the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, are principally to be ſought, as the principall bleſſings; and that they deale prepoſterouſly and abſurdly, who chiefly ſeeke the temporall, or for their ſakes ſeeke the ſpirituall: ſeeing the temporal are but ſmal additions, and acceſſories, and auctaries, appendices and conſequents of the former.

To you] namely, that ſeeke firſt the kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe. For neither the kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe are promiſed as the principall; nor temporall bleſſings, as additions and auctaries; but onely to thoſe who performe the duty, which is the condition of the promiſe. But againſt the truth of this promiſe, two things may be obiected. The former, that to many, who doe not firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe, all theſe things are giuen. The latter, that to many, who doe ſeeke firſt the kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe, all theſe things are not giuen.

To the firſt I anſwere, that when worldlings, who doe not firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe, abound with worldly benefits: it may firſt be doubted, whether they be giuen vnto them of God. For if they bee gotten by vnlawfull meanes, they are not receiued from God as

his gifts, but rather from the diuell, as the prices for which they sell their soules vnto him. Or secondly, if they be giuen of God to a man that setteth his heart vpon the world, immoderately and preposterously seeking the same, it is to be doubted, that they are granted of God in iudgement and anger; as to one whom he hath giuen ouer to his owne lusts. And therefore that they are but (as they say of the gifts of enemies) [illegible], blessings which are turned into curses. Thus the Lord granted Quailes to the Israelites, importunately desiring and longing for them, when they had been better to haue bin without them. Those that chiefly set their hearts vpon the world, and do enioy their hearts desire, are to feare lest they be like the cattel, which going in y best pastures, are fatted for the slaughter. But suppose, that the Lord doth giue the as temporal rewards of moral vertues, or wages for some outward & temporal seruice: yet this promise is not verified of the. For to them, these things, though they be giuen, yet they are not *added*, because they are giuen alone. For alas, these men haue their portion in this life, Psal. 17. and all their good things they receiue whiles they liue heere, Luk. 16: and in this life, as our Sauiour speaketh of other hypocrites, they receiue all their reward. But these are not the portion or reward of Gods children, whose inheritance is in heauen: but small additions vnto their principall rewards. Greater blessings are promised and giuen to them, to which these are added.

Prou. 1. 32. Psal. 73. 17, 18. Ier. 12. 3. Numb. 11. 33. Ier. 12. 3. Psal. 17. 14. Luk. 16. 25. Math. 6. 2, 5.

To the second I answere, that promises of temporall

porall benefits, which are not absolutely good, are not to be vnderstood absolutely: & that to the godly, who first seeke the kingdome of God, & his righteousnes, all these things are added, so far, as they are expedient for Gods glory, & their owne spirituall good: so far, as they are blessings, and not curses; so far, as they do, or ought to seek or desire them. For with these limitations, all promises of temporal blessings are to be vnderstood. For these outward things, if they be not subordinat to Gods glory, and our own spirituall & euerlasting good; they are not to be esteemed good things, nor blessings. And therfore, as they are not within ỳ verge of Gods promise; for promises are of blessings, not of curses: so they are not, or ought not to be within the compasse of our desire. For they that first seek the Kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse; in so doing, subordinate all their worldly desires to Gods glory, & their owne spiritual good: desiring nothing in this world, but so farre as it may stand with Gods glory, and their owne saluation.

Now it is manifest, that it is good many times for the children of God, to be vnder the crosse: and to be afflicted with want of some outward things. But this want, these crosses, doe not hinder their happinesse, but further their good. For they are happy, notwithstanding them, Luk. 6. 20, 21. And therfore to the promise of temporal blessings, made to those which first seeke Gods Kingdome with purpose to renounce all for Christs sake; God hath annexed the promise of the crosse. God in loue doth chastise his children for their

Mark. 10. 30.

Heb. 12. 10.

Pſa.119.71,75. Lam.3.27. profit: and they cannot denie, but that it is good for them that they are afflicted. Yea, *Dauid* pronounceth them happy, whom the Lord doth chaſtiſe, and teach them out of his Law. Thoſe that firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, haue this priuiledge; and as

Pſal.94.12. Eſa.54.17. *Eſay* calleth it, this heritage, that as nothing ſhall hurt them; ſo all things whatſoeuer, as well aduerſity as proſperity, ſhall, by the mercifull diſpenſation of Gods Fatherly prouidence, worke together for their good. This therefore is the diſpoſition of all thoſe, who firſt ſeeke the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſnes. Not to affect, either with couetous worldlings, aboundance, or with ſuperſtitious phantaſticks, voluntary pouerty. Nor to ſeeke to be their owne caruers, and much leſſe to reſolue, that they will attaine to

Rom.8.28. 1.Tim.6.9. great matters in this world (for they that *will be* rich, whether God giue them lawfull meanes or not, doe fall into the ſnare of the Deuill, and are ready to ſwallow his baites) but to ſubmit themſelues to the good, and moſt wiſe prouidence of God, ſeeking and expecting from him ſuch a meaſure of temporall bleſſings, as hee in his Fatherly wiſedome doth know to be moſt expedient for

Pro.30.8. them. This was the prayer of the wiſe man, Pro. 30. And this is the prayer, which by the direction of our Sauiour Chriſt, we are daily to make: Giue me not aboundance, nor giue me not penury, but, Feed me *cibo dimenſi mei*, which our Sauiour cal-

Math.6.11. leth ἐφούσιον ἐπιούσιον, that is, that portion of temporall benefits, which God knoweth to be moſt fitting

fitting and expedient for vs. Therefore notwithstanding theſe obiections, this promiſe made to thoſe, which firſt ſeeke Gods Kingdome and his righteouſneſſe, is moſt true, and as it properly belongeth to them, and not to worldlings: ſo is it euer performed towards them. Pſal 9.10.

And that wee may not onely giue vndoubted credit to this gracious promiſe, but alſo, in ſure affiance and faith therein, be moued to ſeeke firſt the Kingdome of God and his righteouſneſſe; let vs not onely conſider his trueth in his promiſe, but alſo his fidelity in performance, Pſal.37.25. His all-ſufficiencie, in being a plentifull reward to thoſe that ſeeke him, Gen. 15.1. and 17.1. His bountie, giuing all things aboundantly to enioy, 1.Tim.6.17. His prouidence, both generall, who giueth all things to all; all things that are needfull and expedient, (Act. 17.25.) to all creatures, euen to thoſe which were made for mans vſe. Math.6.25,26,&c. the which prouidence of God, the brute creatures ſeeme to acknowledge, Pſal. 104.27. and 145.15. That thoſe men may know themſelues to bee more brutiſh then the brute beaſts, who doe not acknowledge Gods prouidence, and in ſome meaſure depend thereon. And alſo ſpeciall, towards the faithfull, Pſal.106.4,5. and 34.16. For they are of his family, and therfore no doubt hee will prouide for them, 1.Tim.4.10. He is their Paſtor, and therefore they ſhall lacke nothing, Pſal.23.1. Hee is their heauenly Father, and therefore will ſupply their wants, Math.6.32. and 7.11. They are his children in Chriſt, and in him

Math.7.7,8.
Pſal.34.10.
Heb.13.5.
Pro.10.3.
Pſal.9.10.

Pſa 145.15,16.

him haue right to all things, 1. Cor. 3. 22. and therefore, in his iuſtice, will not denie them any thing that is good for them, Pſal. 84. 11. To them he hath giuen his only Sonne; and therefore, with him, will in his loue giue all things profitable, Ro. 8. 32. To them, according to his good pleaſure, he hath appointed a Kingdome. And therefore they neede not feare, but that they ſeeking it firſt, both that Kingdome ſhall be giuen vnto them: and that all theſe things alſo ſhall be added ouer & aboue, by way of aduantage, Luk. 12. 31, 32.

The Lord for his mercies ſake giue vs all grace, firſt to ſeeke his Kingdome, and his righteouſnes: that we may obtaine his righteouſnes in the Kingdome of grace, whereupon will follow peace of conſcience, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt, with a ſupply of all needfull bleſſings in this life: and may in the end attaine to euerlaſting happineſſe in the Kingdome of Glory, where we ſhall haue the fruition of God himſelfe, who is the chiefeſt Good, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord and only Sauiour. To whom with the Father, and the holy Spirit, be all praiſe and glory for euermore.

Amen.

FINIS.